

reference makes no mention of FLASH devices and the memory circuits in these devices. Thus, the Applicant asserts that the Lisenker et al. reference cannot render the process claimed in 1-14, 26-32, and 35-38 obvious. There is no suggestion or statement in the reference that use of a hydrogen isotope would be related to memory loss generally or in a FLASH circuit, in particular. There is certainly no reference to random, single bit data loss in a memory circuit. There is no hint or suggestion in the Lisenker reference that deuterium contacting a silicon wafer has anything to do with random, single bit data loss. Thus, Applicant asserts that the Lisenker reference cannot render the claims of the present invention obvious.

Claim 39 was rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lisenker et al. (PCT/WO 94-19829) as applied to claims 1-5, 7-14, 26-32, and 35-38 above, and further in view of Aomori et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,504,020). As discussed, the Lisenker et al. patent does not refer to FLASH devices and does not describe or suggest that treating a semiconductor layer with a hydrogen isotope would have any impact on reducing random single bit data loss in a memory circuit. To the contrary, the Lisenker reference does not acknowledge that a random single bit data loss problem exists.

Aomori et al. do not describe a use of hydrogen isotope at all. It is not understood how combining these references renders claims of the present invention obvious. The references do not describe the problems being solved and do not describe the method claimed for solving the problem.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's attorney at (612) 373-6976 to facilitate prosecution of this application.

If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0743.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail, in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner of Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231, on this 5 day of February, 2001.

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